



FAIRFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD 95-45

MAINTENANCE STANDARD FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT.

AUTHORITY: Chapter 23 City Ordinance

Chapter 23 of the Fairfield City Code regulates weed and rubbish abatement procedures. Chapter 23 may be viewed in its entirety on the city website at www.ci.fairfield.ca.us or at the Fairfield Fire Department. The following are excerpts from Chapter 23 that are being provided as a quick reference to property owners:

Section 23.1 Definitions:

Rubbish - means waste matter, litter, trash, refuse, debris, and dirt which when dry, may become a fire hazard or which is or may become a menace to health, or which is offensive to the senses.

Streets - includes alleys, parkways, driveways, sidewalks, and areas between sidewalks and curbs.

Weeds - means weeds which when mature bear wings or down seeds, or which because of having attained or which may attain, such a large growth and being dry shall have become a fire menace, or which are otherwise noxious and dangerous to health.

Section 23.2 Public Nuisance:

The City Council does hereby declare that all weeds growing upon private property or streets in the city and all rubbish on private property or streets in the city are public nuisances.

Section 23.3 Duty of property owner to destroy or remove:

It shall be unlawful for any person owning, occupying, renting, managing or controlling any real property in the city to cause or permit any weeds, or to place, cause or permit any rubbish to be or remain on any real property in the city or on portions of streets adjoining such real property to the center line of such streets. It shall be the duty of every such person to remove or destroy such weeds and/or rubbish. Destruction by burning within the city is unlawful unless the written permission of the Fire Chief is first obtained.

Section 23.4.2 Hearing; appeal from notice:

At the time stated in the notices, the city council shall hear and consider all objections to the proposed removal of weeds, rubbish, refuse, and dirt. It may continue the hearing from time to time.

By motion or resolution at the conclusion of the hearing, the city council shall allow or overrule any objections. At that time, the city council has jurisdiction to proceed with a resolution to perform the work of removal. The decision of the city council is final.

Section 23.5 Destruction and removal by city when owner fails to do so:

If the person owning, occupying, renting, managing or controlling real property in the city fails to remove or destroy weeds and rubbish in accordance with the notice given pursuant to the provisions of Section 23.4 or 23.4.1 within ten (10) days after the mailing or posting of such notice, it shall be the duty of the fire chief and his or her assistants, employees, contracting agents, or other representatives, to destroy or remove such weeds or rubbish.

Section 23.10 Method of removal:

The methods of removing weeds, vines, shrubs, brush and/or debris from property as herein provided shall not be an exclusive method, but shall be an alternative method, and such weeds, vines, brush, shrubs, and/or debris may be removed from such property pursuant to the provisions of any law of the state or of any ordinance of the city, applicable hereto.

Sec. 23.11 Maintenance of trees on private property a civil affair.

The maintenance of trees on private property is generally a civil affair that must be resolved by the property owners, and will not be addressed by the city unless the fire chief or his or her designee determines that the situation constitutes a hazard.

MAINTAINENCE STANDARDS:

1. All parcels must be TOTALLY disced or mowed as many times as necessary during fire season to maintain weed growth at four (4) inches or less in height.
2. All weeds must be removed, including those along walkways and curbs around the property perimeter. Sidewalks and walking areas must be kept free of weeds, other noxious vegetation, and rubbish. Mowed weeds/grass shall be removed from the entire lot.
3. All rubbish (waste matter, litter trash, debris, dirt piles) must be removed from the entire parcel. To discourage dumping on vacant parcels, it is recommended that “**NO DUMPING**”, “**NO TRESPASSING**” signs be posted, or that parcels be fenced. (Contact the Fairfield Police Department at 428-7300, for posting requirements.)
4. Dead brush, bushes, vines, and trees must be removed from property. Parcels shall be maintained to allow reasonable access for firefighting operations. Windrows are **NOT** allowed.
5. Discing shall include rototilling or cultivating. Discs shall be set at an angle sufficient to cut the sod growth loose and bury the growth of weeds/grass existing at that time. Weeds/grass growth between disced area and sidewalks, buildings, fences, etc., must be cut down and removed.

VACANT PARCEL DISCING OR MOWING EXCEPTIONS:

If you are claiming an exemption as listed below, you must send a letter to the Fairfield Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau stating which abatement procedure you will be following or your exemption status. If we do not receive this notification, the parcel will be abated to code standard:

1. Parcels under agricultural use are required to have thirty-foot firebreaks adjacent to all developed area fences or structures. The balance of the parcel will require TOTAL abatement by discing or mowing after the crops are harvested.
2. Single parcels being used as pasture (other than irrigated pasture), must have a thirty-foot firebreak around the perimeter of the property. Pastureland is defined as a parcel of land in excess of one (1) acre where sufficient animals are essential to maintain the maximum height of combustible growth to four (4) inches. If the number of animals present cannot control combustible growth, total abatement of the parcel by discing or mowing will be required. Several separate parcels (other than irrigated pasture) grouped by one owner or one user into a single contiguous parcel, which is being used as pasture, will be treated as a single parcel with a single owner.

3. Thirty-foot firebreaks shall be provided around the outside perimeter and around all combustible structures such as buildings, wooden fences, large areas of trees or deadfall, and other combustible foliage. Other areas of the property may require additional firebreaks because of their potential capability to spread fire as: gullies, creeks, etc. These additional needs shall be determined by the fire inspector on a case-by-case basis.
4. Irrigated pastureland is herein described as land used for grazing purposes where irrigation of said land is consistent enough to keep ground growth green. NOTE: Combustible growth that occurs when irrigation ceases must be removed as set forth in these standards.
5. Properties that are protected by any environmental agency due to wetlands, natural habitats, etc. **ARE NOT REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH THESE STANDARDS.**